

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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The Washington State Patrol Commercial Vehicle Division has received numerous inquiries regarding left-hand lane use and posted speeds for “trucks” and how they relate to pick-ups and vehicles in combination.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 46.61.100 (3) states in part, “No vehicle towing a trailer or no vehicle or combination over ten thousand pounds may be driven in the left-hand lane of a limited access roadway having three or more lanes for traffic moving in one direction except when preparing for a left turn at an intersection, exit, or into a private road or driveway when a left turn is legally permitted. . . .” A high-occupancy vehicle lane is not considered the left-hand lane of a roadway.

RCW 46.61.410 states in part, “. . . The maximum speed limit for vehicles over ten thousand pounds gross weight and vehicles in combination except auto stages shall not exceed sixty miles per hour . . . The word “trucks” used by the department on signs giving notice of maximum speed limits means vehicles over ten thousand pounds gross weight and all vehicles in combination except auto stages. . . .”

When the above RCWs refer to gross weight of the vehicles it is the actual scale weight of the vehicle, not the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) usually found on the door frame. The scale weight of a vehicle may be found on the registration provided by the Department of Licensing or it may be weighed by law enforcement if it is thought to be in violation.

Vehicles in combination refers to any type vehicle whether it is a passenger vehicle, pick-up truck, sport utility vehicle or commercial motor vehicle, towing a trailer or any other device in the left-lane of a multi-lane highway.

Any vehicle in excess of ten thousand pounds gross weight or in combination exceeding the posted speed limit for “trucks” or improperly using the left hand lane is at risk of receiving a monetary fine.

If you have any questions, please contact CVEO 3 Steve Gee at (360) 753-0278.

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